APPLICANT ARGUMENTS OR REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-20 and 22 are now in the application. Claims 1, 11and 22 are independent claims. Claims 1 and 11 are amended. Claim 21 is canceled. Claim 22 is new.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 10 -12, 17 and 20 as obvious over Strubbe (US Patent 6,721,706) in view of Kay (U.S. Patent 6,430,602).

The Office Action (page 3) allows that Strubbe fails to specifically teach autonomously updating a context database with at least one real-world context element selected from the group consisting of a score in a sporting contest, a value of a market index, a value of a commodity, a result of a poll and a result of a survey, or some combination thereof.

However, the Office action continues and asserts that Kay (col. 6, line 20-25 and col. 5 line 25) teaches a local cache that can be updated with information such as entertainment history and that entertainment history can be construed as a "score in a sporting contest" because Kay, on a separate line (col. 5, line 25) suggest including athletic teams in the user profile.

Applicant's reserve the right to dispute this conclusion at a latter time if necessary, but in the interest of furthering prosecution, have amended claim 1 to include, in relevant part:

autonomously updating a statement-response database <u>with a learned response</u>;

autonomously updating a context database with at least one real-world context element selected from the group consisting of a score in a sporting contest, a value of a market index, a value of a commodity, a result of a poll and a result of a survey, or some combination thereof;

<u>using said one or more of said context elements to generate a</u>

<u>learned mood number (M_l) indicative of the mood number at the time of obtaining the learned response;</u>

<u>automatically associating said learned mood number with said learned response;</u>

<u>receiving a natural language input;</u>

> automatically obtaining current values of said context elements corresponding to those used in generating said learned mood number;
>
> using said current values of said context elements to generate a current mood number (M_C); and,
>
> automatically generating a response comprising: following a conversation strategy, and searching said updated statement-response database using said current mood number to select a response that is both appropriate to said query and has the learned mood number most closely matched to said current mood number.

Claim 11 contains similar language.

Applicants' claimed invention of claim 1 has been amended to clarify applicants' use of context elements. In particular, applicants' claimed invention of claim 1 obtains one or more context elements that are combined to form a learned mood index, i.e., a number indicative of the state of the selected context elements at the time the response is learned.

In responding to a query, the invention of claim 1, not only considers the question appropriate response, but further factors in how close the current mood index is to the learned mood index of each of the potential question appropriate responses.

As neither Strubbe nor Kay, or any of the other cited prior art, discloses combining the context elements into a single measure such as the mood index, and then using the difference between the mood index at the time a response was learned with the current mood index as part of determining which response to provide, neither Strubbe nor Kay make applicants' invention of claim 1 obvious.

Applicants, therefore, request that this rejection be withdrawn and that claims 1 and 11 be allowed.

As claims 2-10 and 12-14 and 16-20 depend from, and include all the limitations, of an allowable claim, applicants request that they also be allowed

Other Claim rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 3 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Strubbe in view of Kay, and further in view of Dagtas (US Patent 6,973,256).

Claims 4, 5, 14 and 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Strubbe in view of Kay, and further in view of Gusler (US Patent 7,058,565).

Claim 21 is canceled and it's rejection is, therefore moot.

Claims 3, 4 and 5 depend from, and include all the limitations of, allowable claim 1.

Similarly, claims 13 and 14 depend from, and include all the limitations of, allowable claim 1.

Applicants, therefore, request that these rejections be withdrawn, and claims 3, 4, 5, 13 and 14 be allowed.

New Claim

New independent claim 22 has been added. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added. In addition to the limitations cited above that are not found in the prior art, new claim 22 includes the limitations:

automatically weighting said possible responses using said learned mood value stored with said response and said current mood value using the formula:

weight = $1/(1 + C|(M_c) - (M_l)|)$, where C is a constant related to a suitability of said possible response and | | indicates the absolute difference between the current and learned mood values; and,

automatically selecting said lowest weighted response to generate a natural language response to said natural language query.

Neither Strubbe nor Kay, individually or combined, teach or suggest all the claimed elements of applicants' new independent claim 22 as required in a proper 35 USC 103 rejection. Applicants, therefore, request that this rejection be withdrawn and that claim 22 be allowed.

Summary

Therefore in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments, favorable reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of all rejections and objections and that claims 1- 14 and 16-22 be allowed at an early date and the patent allowed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

/Roy J. Rosser/

Roy J. Rosser
Agent for Applicant
Reg. No. 53,533
(609) 638 1909 (Direct Dial Tel. No.)